**Money Matters – Prospering in Difficult Times**

**The Multiplying Factor - Part 2**

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**Sermon Description**

When the human ability is simply not enough, God introduces the multiplying factor. Through the story of the fish and the loaves, Jesus gives us tremendous life lessons on how to impact others, including vision, focus, thanks, and creating solutions.

**Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand**

**John 6:1-15**

**1** After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is *the Sea* of Tiberias. **2**Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased. **3**And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.

**4**Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. **5**Then Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?” **6**But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

**7**Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little.” **8**One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, **9**“There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?”

**10**Then Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. **11**And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed *the* to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. **12**So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, “Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost.” **13**Therefore they gathered *them* up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. **14**Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

**15**Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.

**Luke 9:10-17**

**10**And the apostles, when they had returned, told Him all that they had done. Then He took them and went aside privately into a deserted place belonging to the city called Bethsaida. **11**But when the multitudes knew *it,* they followed Him; and He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who had need of healing. **12**When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, “Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here.”

**13**But He said to them, “You give them something to eat.”

And they said, “We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people.” **14**For there were about five thousand men. Then He said to His disciples, “Make them sit down in groups of fifty.” **15**And they did so, and made them all sit down.

**16**Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke them, and gave *them* to the disciples to set before the multitude. **17**So they all ate and were [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9%3A10-17&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-25319a)]filled, and twelve baskets of the leftover fragments were taken up by them.

**The Problem**

* The disciples looked to themselves for the solution, their focus was on themselves, Jesus’s focus was on the Father
* The needs of the people are beyond human ability to satisfy them
* The need is the hunger of the people.

**The Question**

* Jesus challenged the disciples you give the people something to eat

**The Solution**

* Make them sit in groups of fifty and give them the food

**Central Truth**

1. That we would believe in Christ – the Bread of Heaven
2. The purpose of prosperity and blessing is to reveal the identity of Jesus
3. The Jesus model of multiplication is naturally supernatural.

**John 6:30-33**

**30**Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? **31**Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘HE GAVE THEM BREAD FROM HEAVEN TO EAT.’”

**32**Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. **33**For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

**Sequence of Events**

* Jesus calls His disciples
* Jesus makes known His compassion to His disciples
* He asks them what they have
* He created order by sitting the people down in manageable numbers
* He gave thanks for the bread
* He blessed the fish
* He set them before the people
* They collected 12 baskets of leftovers.

**Main Points**

1. **God blesses what He possess**

* 1. *“When we give to God, what we are actually saying is, “Lord, we trust you”*
  2. Everything must be given back to God, it belongs to Him anyway
* Christians must live with an understanding that we are stewards of everything that the Lord owns
  1. When we put things in the hands of Christ, we can expect an incredible return
* Every account of this story informs us that the people were filled and had as much as they desired
* Furthermore, 12 baskets of the leftovers were collected.
  1. Everything you possess is for His glory – the little boy’s five barley loaves and two fish fed 5000 men with so much to spare
* *“Your little is so much more in the hands of God”*
* *God is always looking to multiply what you have in order that others may be blessed.*

1. **Look to heaven, give thanks and bless what you have**
   1. This is the Jesus model of multiplication.

* 1. Look to heaven – the idea is that Jesus looked at His Father who is the source of all things
* In fact, Jesus lived by the Father
* His power came from the Father
* His anointing came from the Father
* The principal for believers is to look to the Father for all things, with the expectation that God will provide.
  1. **Gratitude** is a central theme throughout the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation
* God expects us to be thankful
* God expects people to demonstrate their gratitude
* God expects that His people will share their blessing with others
* *Gratitude destroys selfishness within our lives*
* *Gratitude keeps us humble.*
  1. Bless what you have and do not curse it
* He was sure to engage the power and the resources of heaven in the feeding of the people
* Speak blessings over what little you may have; God can multiply it at any time.

1. **God is our “source” in heaven, but the “resource” is on the earth**
   1. What do you have in your hands?
   2. The disciples were able to find five loaves and two fish from a little boy, but they questioned what that would be among so many

* *Scarcity is not the problem*, vision and focus are

* 1. Much like the widow with a jar of oil, Jesus multiplied what was at hand
  2. What looked like nothing to the disciples is all that Jesus required
* All were filled – they had as much as they wanted – there were extras available.

1. **Jesus involved His disciples in the problem, the solution and the resolution**

* 1. Jesus challenged His disciples to solve the problem and feed the people
* He tested Philip in particular – asking him how they would feed the people
* Jesus was implying that if you are connected to Him you have the ability to solve the problem.
  1. It is a wise idea to have a financial coach in your life
* They challenge you
* Provide solutions
* Provide possibilities.
  1. The multiplication took place in the hands of the disciples
* God loves to involve people in His miracles.

**Matthew 14:19**

Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes.

* 1. 12 baskets were collected
* We can ascertain from the style of management and stewardship that Jesus:
* Was concerned even with the leftovers
* Many times, people become sloppy when they are blessed
* They lose principles of good stewardship
* They become careless because there is an abundance.
  1. They collected 12 baskets in total
* 12 speaks of divine government and Apostolic fullness.

**Matthew 16:8**

But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, "O you of little faith, why do you reason among yourselves because you have brought no bread?

**Quotes**

*“When God asks the impossible, He wants to do the miraculous”.*

***Scarcity is not the problem***, vision and focus are.

*When we give to God, what we are actually saying is, “Lord, we trust you”.*

**God is our “source”, but the “resource” is on the earth.**

**Closing**

*“When God asks the impossible, He wants to do the miraculous”*

**John 6:33**

For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

**Group Questions & Discussion**

1. Share an example of how abundance may have caused you to become sloppy with finances.
2. How can you bless the things you possess? How can you practice those on a daily basis?
3. Describe what is mean by the quote, “Scarcity is not the problem, vison and focus are”.
4. In the Old Testament, we see the children of Israel always failing and falling into sin after God had blessed them. How can this be? What does this tell us about human nature and tendency?
5. How can we partner with God when it comes to financial stewardship? Give three real life examples.
6. Dive deeper into Jesus’ secret sauce for multiplication—He looked to heaven, He gave thanks, He blessed it. Why did Jesus break the bread? How is this a prophetic act?
7. Why does God insist on placing Him first, giving to Him first, putting things in His hands before we see the blessing?